

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

Claims 1 to 26 (cancelled)

27. (currently amended) An electrode device for rechargeable electrochemical cells which derive their energy storing properties from deposition of a metal element or alloy, the device comprising:

an electrode, said electrode having a volume which increases during a charging process through at least one of metal deposition ~~and alloy or alloy~~ formation;
a porous separator, said porous separator disposed to substantially surround said electrode; and
an electrically insulating spacer, said spacer covering at least a portion of at least one surface of said electrode, said spacer structured to accommodate said volume increase during charging of said electrode, wherein said spacer comprises an electrically insulating frame covering said outer edges of said electrode.

28. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer is at least one of a fabric, a texture, a grid, a net ~~and a perforated sheet or a perforated sheet.~~

29. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer comprises burls.

30. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer has a spongy or foamy structure.
31. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer covers between 5% and 30% of at least one surface of said electrode.
32. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer covers and electrically insulates outer edges of said electrode.
33. (cancelled)
34. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein a material of said spacer is selected from the group consisting of plastic, ceramic, glassy materials and composites of these materials.
35. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said separator is shaped like a substantially closed pocket.
36. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said separator consists essentially of a sheet or diaphragm.
37. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said separator comprises two substantially equally sized sheets or diaphragms which can be connected to one another about a circumference of said electrode through welding or gluing.

38. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 37, wherein said sheets or diaphragms are connected to one another substantially about an entire circumference of said electrode through welding or gluing.
39. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein a material of said separator is one of plastic ~~and synthetic or~~ synthetic thermoplastic.
40. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said separator consists essentially of a ceramic-coated carrier material.
41. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein a material of said separator is ceramic.
42. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer is substantially loosely inserted between said electrode and said separator.
43. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer is rigidly connected to said electrode through at least one of welding, gluing ~~and coating or coating~~.
44. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said spacer is rigidly connected with said separator through at least one of welding, gluing ~~and coating or coating~~.

45. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said electrode and said spacer are formed as one single piece.
46. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 45, wherein said spacer constitutes at least one of a burlled, gridded, netted and ~~honeycombed~~ or honeycombed structure on at least an outer side of said electrode.
47. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 45, wherein said spacer constitutes at least one of a spongy and ~~foamy~~ or foamy structure on at least an outer side of said electrode.
48. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 45, wherein a surface structure of said electrode forming said spacer has an electrically insulating coating.
49. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 27, wherein said separator and said spacer are formed as one single piece.
50. (currently amended) The electrode device of claim 49, wherein at least one side of said separator facing said electrode has at least one of a burlled, gridded, netted and ~~honeycombed~~ or honeycombed structure constituting said spacer.
51. (previously presented) The electrode device of claim 49, wherein at least one side of said separator facing said electrode has a spongy or foamy structure.

52. (previously presented) A rechargeable electrochemical cell which derives its energy storing properties from deposition of an element as a metal or an alloy, the cell comprising at least one electrode device of claim 27.